



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
9:00 a.m./Council Chambers/Freeport City Hall
December 13, 2016 Minutes

I. Meeting Opened

The December 13, 2016 Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Russ Barley. The meeting was held in City Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

Council members present: Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilwoman Kasey Cuchens, Councilwoman Janice McLean, Mayor Russ Barley, & Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon.

Council members absent: Councilwoman Jennifer Laird

Staff present: City Clerk Podraza, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Parks Director Assistant Chris Campbell, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Billing Supervisor Jennifer Douglas, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, & City Engineer William Menadier.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

III. Recognition of Guests:

1. Susan McMinamin- Senior Games Update
 - Freeport Lifeguard Susan McMinamin represented the City of Freeport in the Florida Senior Games Swimming competition held in Clearwater Florida. Susan updated the Council on her performance at the games and thanked the Mayor and Council for giving her this opportunity. Susan qualified in six events and will be participating in the United States National Senior Games next June 2017 in Birmingham, AL. Congratulations to Susan for her achievements.

IV. Approval of Past Minutes

- Minutes for the November 15, 2016 Regular Council Meeting

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the November 15, 2016 Regular Council Meeting Minutes as presented. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

- Minutes for the November 17, 2016 Special Council Meeting

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the November 17, 2016 Special

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Council Meeting Minutes as presented. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

- Minutes for the November 21, 2016 Special Council Meeting

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to approve the November 21, 2016 Special Council Meeting Minutes with specified correction as presented. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

V. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

1. Additions:

- Planning & Zoning – Special Event Permit for Freeport High School
- Sewer – Approve two recommendations for employment
- Councilwoman Cuchens – Add item to Capital Improvement Plan

2. Deletions

- Councilwoman Laird - Discuss Merit Raise for Parks Director

VI. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the Agenda with specified Additions and Deletions as presented. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

VII. Staff Reports

A. City Clerk Matters

1. Budget Amendment to include CDBG Grant Funds

- The budget amendment is a requirement of the grant administration policies per Mr. Ted Court, Government Operations Consultant II, with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Community Revitalization.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve the 2016/2017 Budget Amendment to include CDBG Grant Funds as presented. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

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2. FACC Fall Academy Update

- Clerk Podraza gave the Council a brief overview of the classes she attended at the Florida Association of City Clerks Fall Conference. Podraza thanked the Council for allowing her to participate.

B. Staff Accountant

1. Pay all bills in order

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to pay all bills in order as presented. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Uniform Allowance

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the Employee Uniform Allowance expenditures for 2017 as presented. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

C. Planning & Zoning Dept.

1. Approval of Special Event Permit for Freeport High School

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve the Special Event Permit for the Freeport High School 5K being held January 21st from 8:00 am to 11:00 am in Hammock Bay; from the Gazebo on Great Hammock Bend to the front entrance located on Highway 20. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Budgeted Funding for 331 Business Multi-modal Master Plan

- After Council discussion, this project was tabled until the January 10, 2017 meeting.

3. FAPA Emerald Coast Chapter Appointment/Representative to APA FL Legislative Policy Committee.

- City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel informed the Council that she has been appointed to the FAPA Emerald Coast Chapter to APA FL Legislative Policy Committee. This is a great honor and Council congratulated Latilda for her appointment.

4. Attendance of Legislative Conference in Tallahassee February 7-8, 2017

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel to attend the Legislative Conference in Tallahassee. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

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5. Geotechnical Evaluation for final WWTP location on US 331 N

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the final Geotechnical Evaluation in the amount of \$750.00 for the WWTP Location on US 331 N. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

D. Legal Matters

1. Approve 1st Reading and advertise for *No Wake Zone Ordinance*

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to approve first reading and publication for the "Idle Speed - No Wake Restricted Area" Ordinance. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Interlocal Agreement/Resolution regarding "One Walton"

- The One Walton Interlocal Agreement is crucial to the future growth and development of Freeport, DeFuniak Springs, and Walton County. This agreement is in regards to the expansion and improvement of the water and sewer system along the U.S. Highway 331 Corridor from the Choctawhatchee Bay to DeFuniak Springs. The Agreement was approved by the DeFuniak Springs City Council on December 12, 2016. The Agreement will be presented at the next County Commissioners meeting on December 13, 2016.

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to approve the "One Walton" Interlocal Agreement/Resolution between the City of DeFuniak Springs, the City of Freeport, and Walton County. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

3. Praestare Release

- City Attorney Adkinson updated the Council and presented the letter sent to Praestare that has been redlined by their attorney. Attorney Adkinson reviewed the language adjustments that were made. After Council discussion, Attorney Adkinson agreed to update and execute the letter with changes requested by Praestare.

E. Engineering

1. Engineering Updates Report

- City Engineer William Menadier reviewed the Engineering Updates Report with the Council.

F. Water Dept.: None

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G. Sewer Dept.

1. Councilwoman McLean

- Councilwoman McLean announced that Mayor Barley received a letter from the Northwest Florida Water Management District stating that the City of Freeport has been awarded \$50,000.00 for a Water Supply Development Grant Program.
- Councilwoman McLean presented two different proposals to the Council in regards to the installation and maintenance of Customer Sewage Grinder Pumps. Council discussed and the topic was tabled until the January 10, 2016 Council Meeting.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Permit Renewal Process – \$16,000.00 to Dewberry Preble-Rish

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to approve \$16,000.00 for Dewberry Preble-Rish to proceed with the Wastewater Treatment Plant permit renewal process with DEP. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

- Approve recommendation for two new Sewer Maintenance Workers

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to hire Sewer Maintenance Worker Trainee Ashlee Hardee and Sewer Maintenance Worker Trainee James Pratt. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

H. Parks Dept.

1. Park's Director Assistant Chris Campbell updated the Council with Parks & Recreation matters.
2. Councilwoman Cuchens requested to address the item under her name on the agenda regarding security at the Sports Complex.
 - Council discussed security cameras and off-duty Sheriffs' patrol. Park's Assistant Campbell was asked to have Park's Director Dana research adding more security cameras.
 - The off-duty Officer in attendance at the meeting agreed to ask for more patrol to be added to the Park by the Walton County Sheriff's Department.

VIII. Old Business

A. Freeport Recreation Committee Appointment

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve City Council Appointments for the Freeport Recreation Committee as follows:

- Councilman Farris – Monnie Mixon

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- Councilwoman Laird – Gary Adams
- Councilwoman Cuchens – Aaron Strickland
- Councilwoman McLean – Mickey Strickland
- Councilwoman Brannon – Racyne Diggs

Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

IX. New Business

A. Mr. Michael & Mrs. Estelle Buggs

1. Water Bill

- Mr. & Mrs. Buggs approached the podium and presented their current and past water bills from September through November 2016. Council discussion ensued.

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to waive the second bill presented for a total of \$792.93 that ran from October 6, 2016 through November 2, 2016 and the initial bill of \$892.93 that ran from September 6, 2016 through October 6, 2016 will be divided out into payments over a six (6) month period. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

B. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Approve 2017 Holiday Schedule

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the 2017 Holiday Schedule as presented. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Employee Christmas Lunch on December 14, 2016

3. Close City Hall 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm on December 14th for Employee Lunch

Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to approve the Employee Christmas Lunch and the closing of City Hall from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm on December 14, 2016 so that City Employees will be able to attend. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

C. Councilwoman Brannon

1. Legislative Matters

- Councilwoman Brannon announced the Florida League of Cities Meeting and dinner being held in DeFuniak Springs at the Chautauqua Building on December 15, 2016. The meeting will be at 5:00 pm and the dinner will be at 6:00 pm. A Toy Drive is being held at the FLC meeting for the Walton County Matrix Center. Please bring an unwrapped toy or toiletries for the disadvantaged in the community.

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- Councilwoman Brannon informed the Council that the Triumph Gulf Coast Speaker of the House, Richard Cochran, has announced formation of a Select Committee to ensure that 75% of the Triumph Funds will be distributed to the eight (8) disproportionately affected counties.
 - Councilwoman Brannon received the 2017 assignments for the House Committee/Subcommittee Groupings. The list will be available at the City Clerk's office.
- D. Councilwoman Cuchens
1. Non-Voting Mayor
 - Councilwoman Cuchens informed the Council that in May of 2015, the Council discussed the consideration of going to a Non-Voting Mayor. The City would need to adopt an Ordinance for the referendum to be voted on at the next General Election in July of 2017. Councilwoman Cuchens asked Council if this is still the avenue that the City will be taking.
 - City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council that the Attorney's office is going to prepare the Ordinance which would need to be adopted in the election year that it is going to be effective. The cost for such an election will be around \$1,800.00. The Ordinance calling for the Referendum will be brought to the Council at the January 10, 2017 Regular Council Meeting.
 - ~~2. Security at Freeport Regional Sports Complex~~ (This item previously addressed under Parks)
 3. Personnel Evaluations
 - Councilwoman Cuchens wanted to make sure that staff evaluations are being done. This is something that has gotten a little behind in the past. By conducting evaluations, employees have a good opportunity to be communicated to in regards to areas of improvement. This is also an opportunity for employees to be communicated to about the City's recommendations for them.
 - Councilwoman Cuchens requested to discuss the possibility of Council participation in the evaluation process. City Attorney Adkinson advised that he does not believe the current policy allows it. It would be best to adopt a policy for Council to participate in evaluations. Council discussion ensued no action was taken.
 4. Training for City Clerk for 2017 election
 - Councilwoman Cuchens inquired if the Clerk is scheduled for formal training with the Supervisor of Elections Office for the 2017 General Election. Clerk Podraza informed the Council that the Supervisor of Elections office does not have a formal training program. However, the Clerk has been ensured that the Supervisor of Elections staff will walk her through the process.
 - Councilwoman Cuchens requested that the Qualifying Packets be available for candidates

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- by January. Clerk Podraza agreed to contact the Supervisor of Elections Office and inquire about the Qualifying Packets and make sure they are available as soon as possible.
5. Approval for overtime
 - Councilwoman Cuchens requested confirmation that as of October 1, 2016, a policy is in place that Department Heads must approve overtime unless it is an emergency. Finance Officer Sara Bowers confirmed that a memo has been sent out to all personnel regarding the policy that is currently in place which states, overtime must be preapproved by the Department Head unless it is an emergency.
 6. WFRPC to use Council Chambers
 - Councilwoman Cuchens informed the Council that the West Florida Regional Planning Council has requested the use of the Freeport City Council Chambers to hold meetings in 2017.

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the West Florida Regional Planning Council to use the City of Freeport Council Chambers for meetings during 2017. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

7. Add item to Capital Improvement Plan

Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to update the City of Freeport Capital Improvement Plan to include a Kayak and Canoe Launch at Marse Landing with the funding from the Florida Boating Improvement Grant for up to \$100,000.00 for the 2017 cycle. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

8. Grant updates
 - Councilwoman Cuchens informed the Council about the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Grant which will also be for canoe and boat launches as well as docks. This grant is through the Department of Interior. Councilwoman McLean is working with Parks Director Weiler on this project through River Way South. They will be doing a presentation and will be bringing back information to the Council. Councilwoman Cuchens thanked Councilwoman McLean for working with Parks Director Weiler and Parks Director Assistant Chris Campbell on this grant project.
 - Councilwoman Cuchens updated the Council on the Enterprise Florida Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 for website design. This was originally a state appropriation but is now a grant that will need to be applied for.

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Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the Application Process of the Enterprise Florida Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 for website design and for the City of Freeport to put in \$1000.00 towards the grant if needed. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

E. Councilwoman McLean

1. Rural Development Conference Call
 - Councilwoman McLean reviewed her memo to Council in regards to the telephone conference that was held with Rural Development. The needs of the City of Freeport were discussed in regards to the wastewater treatment plant and sewer system. The anticipated growth of the City as well as data gathering and loan application process information were discussed as well. It was a very positive and productive conference.
2. Tax Information
 - Councilwoman McLean provided the Council with the Walton County Tax Collector Account Districts Report for informational purposes.

F. Councilman Farris

1. Mowing Contract with DOT
 - Councilman Farris informed the Council that after meeting with DOT, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle and he suggest that the City bid out the work for the DOT Mowing Contract. The City currently receives \$10,646.84 to complete this work. More information will be brought to the January 10, 2017 meeting.
2. New Tractor & Mower for Maintaining City Streets
 - If the City continues to do the DOT work, then a tractor and mower will be needed at the cost of approximately \$36,000.00 to \$40,000.00. Council discussed replacing the equipment and more information will be discussed at the January 10, 2016 meeting.
3. Repairing or replacing the Road Side Gator – Used for trash pick-up
 - Council discussed the replacement of both the Parks and the Water Dept. Road Side Gators. Council requested that Larry Tuggle look at acquiring better pricing for two gators. This will be brought back to the January 10, 2016 meeting.

G. Councilwoman Laird

1. ~~Discuss Merit Raise for Parks Director~~

X. Public Comment: None

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XI. Adjournment

Mayor Russ Barley called for a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman McLean motioned to adjourn. The Mayor gaveled and the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

FREEPORT CITY COUNCIL

Mayor

Council President

ATTEST:

City Clerk

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